R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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ROUGH ROCK DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL.

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THE ROUGH ROCK DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL IS LOCATED IN NORTHEASTERN ARIZONA, WHERE THE NAVAJO LANGUAGE IS UNIVERSALLY SPOKEN BY THE NAVAJO PEOPLE. IT IS LOCATED ON A NAVAJO RESERVATION AND WAS DESIGNED AS A BIA EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL TO SERVE 200 ELEMENTARY PUPILS, MOST OF WHOM ARE IN THE BOARDING SCHOOL SITUATION. AN OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHOOL IS TO GAIN INTENSIVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT. TO ATTAIN THIS GOAL, PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO VISIT PUPIL CLASSROOMS AND TO PARTICIPATE IN ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES CONSISTING OF WEAVING, HANDICRAFT, BASKETRY, SILVER MAKING, AND READING AND WRITING THE NAVAJO LANGUAGE. THE ROUGH ROCK CURRICULUM FOR THE YOUNGSTERS INCLUDES--(1) THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, (2) THE TEACHING OF NAVAJO AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (A FEW ANGLO AND HOPI INDIAN CHILDREN ARE ENROLLED), AND (3) THE TEACHING OF NAVAJO HISTORY. TEST RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE, COMPARING PROGRAMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AT ROUGH ROCK WITH THAT AT MANY FARMS, WHICH IS ALSO A BIA SCHOOL. THIS SPEECH WAS DELIVERED AT A CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH AND ACTIVITY IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS FOR THE PRE-PRIMARY/PRIMARY CULTURALLY DIVERSE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING CHILD, HELD IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, JUNE 4-6, 1967, SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHWESTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, INC. (ES)

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Rough Rock Demonstration School

Dr. Jack Forbes

Conference on Research and Activity in the Language Arts for the Pre-Primary/Primary Culturally Diverse Non-English Speaking Child

June 4-5-6, 1967

Sheraton Western Skies Motel

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ROUGH ROCK DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL

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Rough Rock Demonstration School is located twenty-two miles on a dirt road due northwest from Many Farms, Arizona, which is fourteen miles on the paved road north of Chinle. Rough Rock is almost at the center of the Navajo Reservation--northwest of Gallup, New Mexico.

Rough Rock District has been a rather isolated section of the Navajo Reservation. There are some canyon lands and valleys around the Rough Rock School, but there also are a lot of mesas, and a lot of the children live back on mesa tops as well as living back in canyons and valleys. There is very poor road access to most of the homes, although by wagon you can reach the majority of the homes.

It's a rather conservative area from the Navajo cultural standpoint. Just to give you one example: there are some Navajo families in the area who are apparently keeping children out of school so that they can be trained to be Navajo religious leaders. Although ostensibly they give an economic reason for this retention, it seems fairly obvious that traditional Navajo educational procedures are still being followed for some of the children, as well as sending the majority of the children to school for other kinds of educational experiences. It is an area where the Navajo language is universally spoken by the Navajo people.

The Rough Rock School is a boarding school. Of the 200-odd pupils in the elementary school, the overwhelming majority are in the boarding school situation.

Rough Rock is a demonstration school that doesn't just focus upon language alone, but upon many other things such as intensive parental involvement. Parents are in there all the time. The hallways near the front office are full of parents who come in sometimes just to stand there and observe; sometimes just to meet each other and chat. It takes the place of the trading post. They visit classrooms freely. There are also classes going on for adults in weaving, handicraft, basketry, silver making. There are dorm parents who live in the dorm; parents eat in the cafeteria, so it is a community situation, total community involvement. Of course, it has an all-Navajo School Board, only one of whose members is English speaking at all. The rest are monolingual in Navajo.

Besides the teaching of English as a Second Language program, which they do have, and for which they are developing their own materials, they have quite

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a lab in which their staff is developing materials for their own specific needs. They also have special little rooms with earphones and all kinds of manipulative instruments which they use for the children. They have several programs in the Navajo language. Specifically, they have what we might call NSL, Navajo as a Second Language.

They have Navajo as a second language for adults. This involves school personnel and any other adults, including many Navajors from the local communities who come in and take this course. They take the course not because they are learning oral Navajo, but because they are learning to read and write in Navajo. There is a tremendous interest in this program. A lot of adults are coming in who already speak Navajo, but are learning how to read and write. That program involves school teachers. It involves some of the non-teaching employees, and other classes of people.

For the elementary school children, they have Navajo as a second language; for some of the Anglo children of teachers, for Hopi children (there are several Hopi employees' children), and for Navajo children, who are children of parents who had relocated in Los Angeles or some other place and have since come back. This program seems to be very successful. I know some Hopi girls, that my daughter went around with briefly, who were making quite a bit of progress. I also talked with a young Navajo girl who had been in Los Angeles and whose Navajo was very poor, but now she is becoming fluent in Navajo. So, from what I could gather without any measurement, this program seems to be fairly successful.

They also have Navajo for Navajo speakers, but they don't concentrate solely upon language as such. They use the Navajo instructional program to teach part of what they call their cultural identification curriculum, which means that they are teaching many aspects of the Navajo way of life, Navajo culture, and present day conditions. Sometimes they teach it in English; sometimes they teach it in Navajo. In one room, incidentally, they have a line down the middle of the room. When the teacher is on one side of the line, she teaches in English; and when the teacher is on the other side of the line, she uses Navajo, on the same set of children. The purpose is to develop a clear concept relevant to the switch process, back and forth.

I attended a class dealing with Navajo clans. The children are learning about the different groupings of clans, their history and what it means to belong to a clan. This is taught primarily in Navajo. This class seemed to be very successful. The children responded very well. They were interested, and there were a lot of questions. They prepare dittoed material in Navajo, as well as bilingual material relating to this particular program.

They have some test results available, comparing English as a Second Language programs at Rough Rock with that at Many Farms, which is a BIA school. Rough Rock is also a BIA school which is under a special experimental situation. Many Farms is a regular BIA school. If you are interested, I think that by writing or visiting Rough Rock, you could get copies of what measurement results they have available now.